

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 INR-07 SCA-01 H-02 L-02 SS-15

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /050 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E-RSBARRETT:BK

APPROVED BY AF/E-WBCOOTE

AF-NDAVIS (IN DRAFT)

----- 058981

R 241653Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 122246

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, CASC, ET, US (HANNA, RICHARD)

SUBJECT: HANNA CASE

REF: A) ADDIS 6008; B) STATE 101814

1. ASST. SEC. DAVIS CALLED IN ETHIOPIAN CHARGE MEKBIB ON MAY 23 TO DISCUSS HANNA CASE. DAVIS STRESSED TO MEKBIB THE DESIRABILITY OF RESOLVING SUCH BILATERAL IRRITANTS (BEFORE THEY HAD SERIOUS DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON OUR RELATIONS). HE REVIEWED PERTINENT FACTS OF CASE AS IT STANDS AT PRESENT: LENGTHY DETAINMENT, NONCONFORMITY OF HANNA CASE WITH VALID TREATY OBLIGATIONS AND WITH OUR TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP; GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THERE ARE NO CHARGES PENDING AGAINST HANNA; AND APPARENT COMPLETION OF TRIAL FOR WHICH HANNA WAS BEING HELD AS A WITNESS. DAVIS MENTIONED THAT EMBASSY HAD RAISED MATTER BOTH ORALLY AND IN WRITING ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WITH HIGH-LEVEL GOE OFFICIALS, WHO INDICATED IT WOULD BE PROMPTLY AND FAVORABLY RESOLVED; YET NOTHING HAS HAPPENED. DAVIS ALSO INFORMED MEKBIB OF INTEREST SENATOR SPARKMAN'S OFFICE HAS SHOWN IN CASE AND DANGER THAT IT COULD BECOME A PUBLIC ISSUE (REF B).

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2. MEKBIB REPLIED THAT HE WAS GLAD MR. DAVIS HAD CALLED

HIM IN ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE HE ALSO WAS INTERESTED IN RESOLVING THESE IRRITANTS, AS HAD BEEN AMBASSADOR KIFLE.

HE COMMENTED THAT THESE WERE "TRYING TIMES" IN ETHIOPIA WHICH WAS UNDERGOING "BIG CHANGES" AND THINGS WERE NOT ALWAYS FULLY UNDER CONTROL. HE DID NOT THINK HANNA CASE WAS DELIBERATELY AIMED AT THE U.S. AND KNEW THAT MANY ETHIOPIANS STILL BELIEVED IN RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS.

3. MEKBIB STATED THAT HE HAD NOTHING OFFICIAL ON THE HANNA CASE, ONLY WHAT WAS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN, AND THAT HANNA HAD APPARENTLY BEEN ACCUSED OF ILLEGAL MONEY TRANS-ACTIONS AND "OTHER ACTIONS UNBECOMING A FOREIGNER." HE SAID HE WOULD CONTACT FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE IMMEDIATELY ON THE CASE AND INFORM HIM OF USG CONCERN. HE WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SUCH TREATMENT APPLIED AN ETHIOPIAN IN THE U.S. AND WOULD DO HIS BEST TO GET THE KASE RESOLVED. HE ADDED PHILOSOPHICALLY THAT "THESE THINGS HAPPEN SOME TIME" AND HOPED IT WOULD NOT AFFECT RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

4. COMMENT: ON WAY OUT OF BUILDING MEKBIB TOLD AF/E OFFICER THAT HE WAS EXPECTING A CALL FROM KIFLE LATER THAT DAY AND WOULD BROACH SUBJECT AT THAT TIME. KISSINGER

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